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Letters to the Editor

Who's in Charge?

Does the Secretary of State really think that he can escape from being concerned about any private boycotts of countries or firms doing business with Cuba? He asserts "that's something that is in the hands of private citizens; we have no part in that ourselves."

Of course he and the Department of State have "a part" in that, simply because it affects American foreign relations. That should be obvious, despite any sort of dissembling disclaimer. And isn't the decision-making power over foreign relations splintered enough already, without openly inviting others to take part?

Congress, the Pentagon, the CIA, and divers other organs in the Executive Branch help make policy, with or without cutting the State Department in. The longshoremen make it in refusing to load ships with wheat destined for the USSR. The State of Florida makes it when the Federal Government casually turns over Cuban fishermen to state authorities for prosecution under a statute of questionable constitutionality. And so it goes.

Perhaps we should be happy, in these days of fears of big government, that one organ of the Federal "monolith" is willing to share its powers and responsibilities. But is this any way to conduct foreign policy? I think not.

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